

EXAMINER'S AMENDMENT

1. An examiner's amendment to the record appears below. Should the changes and/or additions be unacceptable to applicant, an amendment may be filed as provided by 37 CFR 1.312. To ensure consideration of such an amendment, it MUST be submitted no later than the payment of the issue fee.

Authorization for this examiner's amendment was given in a telephone interview with Louis Woo on February 29, 2008.

The application has been amended as follows:

- 1) On page 1, in the first line of the third paragraph: "WO-A-02/05501" has been changed to --WO-A-02/055001--.
- 2) On page 6, in the ninth line of the last paragraph: The number "66" has been changed to --60--.
- 3) In claim 12, line 3: The first instance of the term "means" has been changed to --mechanisms-- and the second instance of the term "means" has been changed to --mechanism--.
- 4) In claim 12, lines 4 & 7; in claim 13, line 3; and in claim 27, line 2: The term "means" has been changed to --mechanisms--.
- 5) In claim 12, line 6: Only the first instance of the term "means" has been changed to --mechanisms--.
- 6) In claim 27, line 3: The term "means" has been changed to --mechanism--.

- 7) In claim 27, lines 4 & 7 and in claim 28, line 2: Only the second instance of the term "means" has been changed to --mechanisms--.

2. The following is an examiner's statement of reasons for allowance: The examiner respectfully asserts that none of the prior art, taken either singly or in combination, is seen to teach or suggest the use of a medical apparatus having first and second relatively movable parts; a drive means for causing relative movement therebetween; and a control means for controlling the operation of the drive means, the control means including the particular components of a sensor for detecting the relative position of the first and second parts, an acceleration control system specifically having a *first* acceleration control for operating the drive means in a first acceleration phase *utilizing a preset power increase protocol and the sensor*, a *second* acceleration phase having a set speed value at a set acceleration rate, *and* a deceleration control system including a deceleration control *utilizing a preset power decrease protocol*, as explicitly recited in Applicant's independent claims 1 and 15. With respect to the prior art, most references (e.g., Falbo '949, Harrawood et al. '112 and Harrawood et al. '105) disclosing the use of a variable-speed patient support device simply describe the use of a conventional microprocessor or circuitry which merely alters the speed of at least one associated motor in order to impart a smooth motion to the supporting surface of the device, as opposed to the use of a control means comprising an acceleration control system specifically having dissimilar first and second acceleration phases as well as a deceleration control system as particularly recited in Applicant's claims. Hence, it is considered that the application is currently in full and proper condition for allowance.

Any comments considered necessary by applicant must be submitted no later than the payment of the issue fee and, to avoid processing delays, should preferably accompany the issue fee. Such submissions should be clearly labeled "Comments on Statement of Reasons for Allowance."

Any inquiry concerning this communication or earlier communications from the examiner should be directed to Robert G. Santos whose telephone number is (571) 272-7048. The examiner can normally be reached on Tues-Fr and first Mondays, 10:30 a.m. to 8:00 p.m..

If attempts to reach the examiner by telephone are unsuccessful, the examiner's supervisor, Patricia L. Engle can be reached on (571) 272-6660. The fax phone number for the organization where this application or proceeding is assigned is 571-273-8300.

Information regarding the status of an application may be obtained from the Patent Application Information Retrieval (PAIR) system. Status information for published applications may be obtained from either Private PAIR or Public PAIR. Status information for unpublished applications is available through Private PAIR only. For more information about the PAIR system, see <http://pair-direct.uspto.gov>. Should you have questions on access to the Private PAIR system, contact the Electronic Business Center (EBC) at 866-217-9197 (toll-free). If you would like assistance from a USPTO Customer Service Representative or access to the automated information system, call 800-786-9199 (IN USA OR CANADA) or 571-272-1000.

/Robert G. Santos/
Primary Examiner, Art Unit 3673